

### Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently amended) A compressed knitted wire mesh seal element for an exhaust system, consisting essentially of: a combination of an annealed soft flat wire mesh and a hard wire mesh that does not soften at the elevated temperature of a catalytic converter, the soft wire mesh being present on the outer surface of the element, the element being a tube of hard wire knitted mesh within a tube of soft wire knitted mesh, rolled into a ring, and compressed into a ~~made by compressing the combined meshes~~ mesh having an annular geometry.
2. (Cancelled.)
3. (Original) The element of claim 1, wherein the soft wire is at least as heat resistant as type 309 stainless steel.
4. (Original) The element of claim 1, wherein the soft wire has an oxide coating on its surface.
5. (Original) The element of claim 1, wherein the hard wire is precipitation-hardened.
6. (Original) The element of claim 1, wherein the element has a rectilinear geometry, an elliptical geometry, or a combination thereof.
7. (Previously presented) The element of claim 1, wherein the element is in the geometry of an annulus having a flange at an edge thereof.
8. (Original) The element of claim 6, wherein the ring is has multiple mesh layers.
9. (Currently amended) A catalytic converter assembly, comprising: a substrate for a catalytic converter comprising a ceramic monolith disposed in a housing

and a first compressed wire mesh element disposed on the upstream side of the converter; said wire mesh seal element consisting essentially of a combination of an annealed soft flat wire mesh and a hard wire mesh that does not soften at the elevated temperature of a catalytic converter, the soft wire mesh being present on the outer surface of the element, and the element being a tube of hard wire knitted mesh within a tube of soft wire knitted mesh, rolled into a ring, and compressed into a ~~made by compressing the combined meshes~~ mesh having an annular geometry.

10. (Currently amended) The assembly of claim 9, wherein the monolith is elliptical, rectilinear, or a combination thereof in cross-section, and further comprising a second compressed wire mesh seal element disposed on the downstream side of the monolith comprising consisting essentially of a combination of an annealed soft flat wire mesh and a hard wire mesh that does not soften at the elevated temperature of a catalytic converter, the soft wire mesh being present on the outer surface of the element, and the element being a tube of hard wire knitted mesh within a tube of soft wire knitted mesh, rolled, and compressed into a ~~made by compressing the combined meshes~~ mesh disposed on the downstream side of the monolith having an annular geometry.

11. (Cancelled.)

12. (Cancelled.)

13. (Original) The assembly of claim 9, wherein the hard wire is precipitation-hardened stainless steel.

14. (Original) The assembly of claim 10, wherein the hard wire is precipitation-hardened stainless steel.

15. (Original) The assembly of claim 11, wherein the hard wire is precipitation-hardened stainless steel.

16-23. (Cancelled.)

24. (New.) The element of claim 1, wherein the annular mesh seal has a central bore and a flange extending into the central bore.

25. (New.) The assembly of claim 9, wherein the annular mesh seal on the upstream side has a central bore and a flange extending into the central bore.

26. (New.) The assembly of claim 10, wherein the annular mesh seal on the downstream side has a central bore and a flange extending into the central bore.

27. (New.) The element of claim 1,